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Judicial Council Announces 2010 Winners of Distinguished Service Awards

Three Honored for Service to Justice System and Public

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California has announced the winners of its 2010 Distinguished Service Awards. The highest honors given by the council, the awards are presented to those who demonstrate extraordinary leadership and make significant contributions to the administration of justice in California.

The program is now in its 17th year, and the awards will be presented later in 2010. The recipients follow.

Ronald M. George Award for Judicial Excellence

This award honors members of the judiciary for their extraordinary dedication to the highest principles of the administration of justice. The award, previously called the Jurist of the Year Award, was renamed to honor Chief Justice Ronald M. George, by the chairs of the Judicial Council's internal committees.

Administrative Presiding Justice Arthur G. Scotland, of the Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District (Sacramento), was honored for his contributions to the statewide administration of justice, his leadership of the Third Appellate District, and his humanitarian work in Sacramento.

A jurist for 23 years, Justice Scotland has served on both the trial and appellate courts. As a member of the Court of Appeal for 21 years, he has written numerous significant opinions on important legal issues.

In addition to his contributions to the law, Justice Scotland has demonstrated great leadership and extraordinary commitment to the administration of justice. In 2000, he spearheaded the Third Appellate District's outreach program, holding oral argument sessions in high

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schools throughout the court's 23 counties to educate students about California's justice system. The program won a 2001 Ralph N. Kleps Award for Improvement in the Administration of the Courts and has held 20 off-site sessions in the past 10 years.

For years, Justice Scotland has served as member and president of the Anthony M. Kennedy American Inns of Court to improve the professionalism, civility, and ethics of judges, lawyers, and law students. He also has served as president of the Council of Chief Judges of the State Courts of Appeal, where he spearheaded the creation of a long-range planning committee and an administration of justice committee.

In 2005, Justice Scotland received a public service award from the American Board of Trial Advocates, Sacramento Valley Chapter, for his service to the community. In 2002, he was named Humanitarian of the Year by the Sacramento County Bar Association for his volunteer work in a residential and treatment facility for abused and neglected children. In 2004, he was named Judge of the Year by the Sacramento County Bar Association.

Justice Scotland has served on the Judicial Council and its Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Advisory Committee on Juvenile Court Law, and Administrative Presiding Justices Advisory Committee.

Judicial Administration Award

This award honors individuals in judicial administration for significant contributions to and leadership in their profession.

Curtis L. Child, director of the Office of Governmental Affairs of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), was chosen for his distinguished service as the chief legislative advocate for the judicial branch and for working to strengthen collaboration between the judicial and legislative branches of government.

Since his appointment in November 2007, Mr. Child has worked vigorously and successfully to advance the strategic goals and policies of the Judicial Council through his tireless work with the executive and legislative branches of California government. Under his direction, several landmark legislative and budgetary goals were achieved, including the creation of a framework for the largest court facilities financing program in the state's history, authorizing up to \$5 billion in revenue bonds for construction and renovation of 41 courthouses throughout the state with the most immediate and critical needs.

Most recently, Mr. Child has worked to negotiate a budget proposal for the 2010–2011 fiscal year that will include sufficient funding to keep California courts open to serve the public despite the state's continuing economic crisis.

Mr. Child's office has succeeded in obtaining legislation to implement recommendations of the Judicial Council's Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, of which he is a member. Those recommendations include a measure authorizing the council to implement a cost recovery program for dependency counsel costs and directs that recovered funds be used to reduce caseloads for attorneys. Mr. Child also oversaw, along with the California Judges Association, passage of a bill that authorized counties and courts to continue providing local judicial benefits.

At the same time, Mr. Child has worked closely with the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee and the Bench-Bar Coalition to ensure that the judicial branch delivers an effective and cohesive message on critical issues to leaders in the executive and legislative branches.

Before joining the AOC, Mr. Child was the principal consultant to the state Assembly Committee on Human Services and took the lead role on child welfare, foster care, and developmental disabilities issues for the committee. He also established the Sacramento office of the National Center for Youth Law and was responsible for advocacy of child welfare, child support, public benefits, and health-care issues affecting low-income children and families. He served as the director of the California Department of Child Support Services for Governor Gray Davis and was a legal aid attorney for 12 years.

Bernard E. Witkin Amicus Curiae Award

This award honors individuals other than members of the judiciary for their outstanding contributions to the courts of California.

Senator Darrell S. Steinberg, President pro Tempore of the California Senate, was selected for his outstanding legislative service to Californians and for working effectively to resolve the State Budget last year to minimize the impact on the judicial branch and court users.

Senator Steinberg's service to California has earned him numerous awards and citations, including the 2010 John F. Kennedy Library Foundation's John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, the nation's most prestigious honor for public servants, for leading a bipartisan effort to solve California's devastating budget deficit in 2009.

Most recently, Senator Steinberg has worked with Assembly Member Mike Feuer, Assembly Majority Leader and chair of the Assembly Judiciary Committee, to obtain a consensus on the 2010–2011 State Budget that seeks to minimize the effect of the state's budget crisis on the judicial branch, keep California courthouses open for service to the public, and avoid statewide court closures and staff layoffs.

Senator Steinberg also carried bills in the Legislature to provide for continuous appropriation of revenues dedicated to courthouse construction projects and to authorize counties and courts to continue to provide local judicial benefits to superior court judges. He also has sponsored bills to improve accountability, educational consistency, and stable placements for children in foster care and to require the state Department of Mental Health to take measures to help foster children obtain mental health services.

As an Assembly member, he served on the Judicial Council from 2000 to 2002, actively supporting the council's goals for the fair administration of justice and efficient operation of the courts, and he continued that support as President pro Tempore of the California Senate.

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and ensures leadership and excellence in court administration.